THE WORLD.

NUMBER XLVI.

By *ADAM FITZ-ADAM.*

To be continued every THURSDAY.

THURSDAY, *November* the 15th, 1753.

To Mr. FITZ-ADAM.

SIR,

"WHEN a rich man ſpeaketh," ſays the ſon of Sirach," every man "holdeth his tongue; and lo! "what he ſayeth is extolled to the "clouds: but if a poor man ſpeak, "they ſay, what fellow is this?" I had a mortifying opportunity yeſterday of experiencing the truth of this obſervation.

IT is not material that I ſhould tell you who or what I am; it will be enough to ſay, that though I dine every day, and always make my appearance abroad in a clean ſhirt, I have

have no thoughts of offering myſelf as a candidate for a borough at the next general election, nor am I quite ſo rich as a certain man of faſhion, who took ſuch a fancy to me this ſummer in the country, as hardly to be eaſy out of my company.

THIS great perſon came to town laſt week for the winter; whither I was called upon buſineſs ſoon after; and having received a general invitation to his table, I went yeſterday to dine with him. Upon my being ſhewn into the parlour, I found him ſitting with two young gentlemen, who, as I afterwards learnt, were perſons of great quality, and who, before I was bid to ſit down, entered into a ſhort whiſper with my friend, which concluded with a broad ſtare in my face, and the words, "I thought ſo," uttered with a careleſs contempt, and loud enough for me to hear.

I WAS a little diſconcerted at this behaviour, but was in ſome meaſure relieved by a meſſage a few minutes after, that dinner was upon the table. We were ſoon ſeated according to form; and as the converſation was upon general ſubjects, or rather upon no ſubject at all, and as the having ſomething to ſay enables a modeſt man to ſit eaſier in his chair, I now and then attempted to put in a word, but found that I had not the good fortune to make myſelf heard. The playhouſes happening to be mentioned, I aſked very reſpectfully if any thing new was to be exhibited this ſeaſon? Upon which it was obſerved, "that the winter was come in upon "us all at once, and that there had been ice in Hyde "park of near half an inch thick." Upon my friend's taking notice that there had been a very great court that morning, I took occaſion to enquire how the King did? when it was immediately remarked, "that the opera "this winter would certainly be a very grand one." As

I was a proficient in muſic, and a friend to the Italian opera, I hoped to be attended to, by ſaying ſomething in favour of ſo elegant an entertainment; but before I had proceeded through half a ſentence, the converſation took another turn, and it was unanimouſly agreed, "that "my lord Somebody's Greenland dog was the fineſt of "the kind ever ſeen in England." It was now high time for me to have done; I therefore contented myſelf with playing the dumb man till the cloth was removed, and then took my leave.

AT my return to my lodgings, I could not help thinking that it was not abſolutely impoſſible for great men to be very ill-bred; but however that matter may be, I ſhall eat my dinner at the chop-houſe to-day, notwithſtanding I have juſt received a card from my friend, to tell me, "that he dines alone, and ſhall be quite un-"happy without me." I am,

SIR,

Your moſt humble ſervant,

F. B.

BATH, *October* the 29th, 1753.

MR. FITZ-ADAM,

AMONG the many inventions of this wiſe and polite age, I look upon the *art of not knowing people* to be one of the greateſt. But for fear the term ſhould be a little too technical for many of your readers, I ſhall explain it at large. What I mean is, that perſons of diſtinction ſhall meet their inferiors in public places, and either walk, ſit, or ſtand cloſe at their elbows, without having the leaſt recollection of them; whom but a week or a day before, they have been particularly intimate with, and for whom they have profeſſed the moſt affectionate regard. As you have taken no notice of this art, in all probability the profeſſors of it have eſcaped you; but

but as I have lately been the ſubject of it's fulleſt exertion, I beg leave to trouble you with a few words upon the occaſion.

I AM a clergyman of ſome fortune, though no preferment; and knowing that I had many friends at the Bath this ſeaſon, I came hither laſt week to enjoy the pleaſure of their converſation. The morning after my arrival I took a walk to the pump-room, where I had the honour of ſeeing a noble lord, a baronet, and ſome ladies of quality, with whom I was very well acquainted; but to my great ſurpriſe, though I ſtood at the diſtance of only two or three yards from them, I did not perceive that any one of them knew me. I have dined ſeveral times with his lordſhip, have frequently drank tea with the ladies, and ſpent two months this ſummer with the baronet, and yet am throwing myſelf in their way every morning, am ſitting next them in the rooms every evening, nay, playing at cards with them at the ſame table, without their having the leaſt remembrance of me. There is alſo a very genteel family in the place, in which I have been ſo extremely intimate, that according to the ſong,

I have drank with the father, have talk'd with the mother,
Have romp'd with the ſiſter, and gam'd with the brother,

but, for what reaſon I know not, unleſs it be in imitation of the lord and ladies abovementioned, with whom they happen to be acquainted, I do not find that any one of them has the leaſt knowledge of me.

I HAVE looked in the glaſs above a hundred times, from a ſuſpicion that my face muſt have undergone ſome extraordinary change, to occaſion this total want of recollection in my friends; but I have the ſatisfaction of finding that my eyes, noſe and mouth are not only remaining, but that they ſtand, as near as I can gueſs, in the

the very individual places, as when my friends knew me; and that their forgetfulneſs is altogether owing to this new-invented art; an art, which it ſeems none but perſons of faſhion, or a few very genteel people who have ſtudied under them, can make themſelves maſters of. But it is an art that will undo me, if a living which my friend the noble lord has been ſo good as to aſſure me of, ſhould happen to become void while I am in this place; for how can I ſuppoſe that his lordſhip will give that to an entire ſtranger, which he has long ago promiſed to an intimate acquaintance? I am,

SIR,

Your humble ſervant,

ABRAHAM ADAMS.

I HAVE taken the firſt opportunity of publiſhing theſe letters, not from a conviction that the writers of them have any cauſe of complaint, but from a deſire of removing falſe prejudices, and of doing juſtice to the characters of great people. As for the ſon of Sirach, whom the firſt of my correſpondents has thought proper to quote, everybody knows that his writings are apocryphal; and as to the matter complained of, namely, that a private man cannot make himſelf heard among lords and great folks, it is the fault of nature, who it is well known has formed the ears of perſons of quality only for hearing one another. My other correſpondent, who is piqued at not being known, is equally unreaſonable; for he cannot but have obſerved at the playhouſes and other public places, from the number of glaſſes uſed by people of faſhion, that they are naturally ſhort-ſighted. It is from this viſual defect, that a great man is apt to miſtake fortune for honour, a ſervice of plate for a good name, and his neighbour's wife for his own. His memory is in many inſtances as defective as his ſight. Be-

nefits,